



For More Information Contact:

Matthew R. Allen
Public Affairs Specialist
(509) 434-7000, ext. 6205
Matthew.Allen2@va.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**LOCAL SPOKANE BUSINESSES ARE READY
FOR 2009 NATIONAL VETERANS WHEELCHAIR GAMES**

Spokane, WA — June 17, 2009—Local Spokane business owners are preparing their restaurants and stores for the largest annual wheelchair sports event in the world, the 29th National Veterans Wheelchair Games. The Games are less than one month away, and businesses are making their locations more wheelchair friendly.

The 29th National Veterans Wheelchair Games will take place July 13-18, 2009 with 17 events spread throughout Spokane. When not participating at an event, over 600 athletes along with their families and coaches will have time to enjoy Spokane and our local restaurants and stores.

With a few minor adjustments, businesses can create a wheelchair friendly atmosphere that is welcoming to athletes and their families. To start, companies can consider viewing their establishment through the eyes of an individual in a wheelchair. Owners can check what their customers will see from a wheelchair at eye-level as well as what they can reach at arms length. In addition, businesses can confirm whether the aisles of their establishment are wide enough to allow easy access for a wheelchair. Aisles should be 36 inches wide and can be measured with a yard stick to certify there is ample distance between shelves, tables, chairs, and walls. Also, dining establishments may find it beneficial to remove a percentage of chairs from tables and waiting areas to provide extra room for wheelchair patrons. Last, it will be beneficial to have a specific space to place unused wheelchairs to avoid clutter.

Spokane is well known for our hospitality and being a “Great Place to Live,” and we’re excited to be hosting what is shaping up to become the largest Wheelchair Games in history!

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The Games are sponsored by the Department of Veterans Affairs and Paralyzed Veterans of America. The Spokane VA Medical Center and PVA’s Northwest Chapter are hosting the Games. For more information,



contact Matthew R. Allen at (509) 434-7000, ext. 6205; or Matthew.Allen2@va.gov. The Games Web site is www.wheelchairgames.va.gov.